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FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM Crossfire

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ANNOUNCER: From Washington, Crossfire. The hosts for Crossfire: on the left, Tom Braden; on the right, Pat Buchanan. In the crossfire, Mike Farrell, actor and head of the Committee of Concern.

TOM BRADEN: That vision of peace the world thought it saw over the mountains in El Salvador earlier this week was revealed today as a mirage. The army of El Salvador, assisted by U.S. advisers, launched a major drive into rebel territory. And at the same time, rebel forces halted traffic across two-thirds of the nation. No trains were running, no buses, trucks, nor cars.

Meantime, President Reagan disassociated himself from a CIA pamphlet instructing Contra forces in Nicaragua on how best to conduct assassinations.

Endless war. That's the prospect. Is there any way to stop it?

PAT BUCHANAN: Mike Farrell, you're a famous American from M*A*S*H. This country has treated you extremely well, the United States. Now you're heading up this Committee for Concern about Central America. The country has treated you that well. Why would you have a cocktail party and warmly receive a fellow named Daniel Ortega, who is the commandante of a Marxist regime in Central America which says in its national anthem your country, the United States is, quote, the enemy of mankind?

MIKE FARRELL: Well, we had a party -- or I attended a party honoring or receiving Commandante Ortega because we wanted to hear what he had to say. We think it's important for people,

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if you're interested in peace, to at least have channels of communication.

BRADEN: Do you mind if I just interject and ask whether you think President Reagan might have offered Gromyko a cup of coffee at the White House the other day?

BUCHANAN: Mr. Farrell, it says you warmly received --this is your...

FARRELL: Well, I didn't say I warmly received. I said I warmly received?

BUCHANAN: This is what I read right in my file. It says, "Mike Farrell warmly received Commandante Ortega."

FARRELL: I was there. Ortega was there. So was Senator Christopher Dodd of Connecticut. So were a number of other loyal Americans. Are you questioning my loyalty because I had some words with Commandate Ortega?

BUCHANAN: I'm asking you why you had a warm reception and a cocktail party.

FARRELL: Because he was coming. Because he's the head of state of a country which is engaged in negoti -- not in negotiations, in confrontation with this nation. And I'm afraid it's headed toward warfare. And I would like to see something done to lower the level of tensions and see if we can't communicate rather than have a war.

BUCHANAN: When you talked to Commandante Ortega, did you ask him why he needed all those Cubans, Soviets, PLO, Libyans, Bulgarians, and East Germans?

FARRELL: Not only does he say that there are none there, when I was there I saw none of them there.

BUCHANAN: Are you suggesting there are no Cubans?

FARRELL: I'm suggesting that there is no scientific, there is no intelligence evidence to back up these ridiculous claims that are being made by people on the right of...

BUCHANAN: All right. Let me give you a person on the right. Vice President George Bush...

FARRELL: Yes, who lied on television just the other night in the debate.

BUCHANAN: He said there were 2000 Cuban military advisers...

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FARRELL: Cuban military advisers. That is correct. Yes, he said it, and it was wrong. It's not correct.

BUCHANAN: In other words, George Bush lied to the American people.

FARRELL: That's correct. He also...

BUCHANAN: How does Mike Farrell know George Bush is a liar? He was using -- he used to be head of the CIA.

FARRELL: He did. And I think he ought to know better than to make statements like that that are not verifiable and not factual.

BUCHANAN: How do you know he's wrong?

FARRELL: Well, because the NATO intelligence agencies have said there are between two and three hundred Cuban military advisers in Nicaragua.

BUCHANAN: How do you know they're right and Bush is wrong?

FARRELL: And because the other independent and objective organizations that have gone in there and viewed the situation...

BUCHANAN: Give me some of those.

BRADEN: Mr. Buchanan, do you mind if I help you with the problem of Mr. Bush?

BUCHANAN: Go ahead.

BRADEN: Mr. Bush made a number of misstatements...

FARRELL: He certainly did.

BRADEN: ...in the debate with Mrs. Ferraro. They have been listed widely in the newspapers. I'm surprised you haven't read them.

FARRELL: He also said that Nicaragua was a gross violator of human rights, as opposed to the wonderful -- implicitly, at least, as opposed to the wonderful human rights records of our allies there (El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala), which is a joke. I mean it's so inaccurate as to be, unfortunately, humorous.

BUCHANAN: Tell me about Commandante Ortega and the nice

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things he's done for the Miskito Indians down there.

FARRELL: Commandante Ortega has done a number of things for the Miskitos, some of which were horrifying, and I object to them strongly, and have in Nicaragua and in the United States.

BUCHANAN: What did you say to him, Mike, when Commandante Ortega -- did you say, "What in the hell are you people doing with the Miskitos?"

FARRELL: Is there any purpose in this? What about us in the United States concerning ourselves with United States policy and whether or not we are trying to teach people how to assassinate, manipulate, blackmail and torture Contras in...

BUCHANAN: Was Nora Astorga at this party?

FARRELL: No. I don't know that she was. I did meet her, though, when I was in Nicaragua. What would you like to make of that?

BUCHANAN: I'll tell you what. Nora Astorga, she was one of the opponents of the Sandinistas. She invited that general into her boudoir.

FARRELL: That's what I understand.

BUCHANAN: He was assassinated there. His eyes were picked out with an ice pick. His throat was cut. And his private parts were stuffed into his mouth and his mouth was taped shut. And that's the way he was delivered up.

FARRELL: I don't know about any of those things.

BUCHANAN: You didn't?

FARRELL: No.

BUCHANAN: What would you think about that?

FARRELL: I would think that to be a horrifyingly anti-human and grisly thing to do. What do you think about those things when they're done by the other side?

BUCHANAN: I agree with you on it.

FARRELL: Okay. Then I think what we ought to do is find where we have common ground and try and find a way to communicate about what we can do, as loyal American citizens, in...

[Confusion of voices]

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BRADEN: Let's be serious for a second. Why can't the U.S. policy move to demilitarize the region? Would that be a solution? And isn't that what the Contadora process is all about?

FARRELL: Of course it is. The Contadora process is the thing that the American government and the American State Department has been supporting as a peace measure in that region for the last year. And then the minute the Nicaraguans have the audacity to sign it, they turn their tail and say, "No, that's not appropriate anymore." I don't understand that.

BUCHANAN: Mike, look, let's look at Nicaragua. You obviously think what's going on there has -- bad things have happened, but basically good things.

FARRELL: No. I simply think there are bad things and good things about it. But I think it is also a Nicaraguan problem that should be resolved by Nicaraguan people, not by the United States CIA.

BUCHANAN: Nicaragua has the support, internationally, down there of Libya. It has the support, internationally...

FARRELL: Oh, come on.

BUCHANAN: Hold it, hold it. What I want to get at is this: They've got Cuba behind them, they've got the Soviets, Bulgarians, Libyans. Let's not argue about how many are down there. What other...

FARRELL: Let's not accept that as fact. That is your opinion.

BUCHANAN: All right. Let's say none of them are there, but they've got their diplomatic backing.

What other fairly ideal or improving situation, in terms of human rights and political rights, in what other country in the world are those coalition of forces behind the regime?

FARRELL: I'm not sure I understand the question or the point. If we're going to talk about Nicaragua, let's talk about Nicaragua. When I was there and talked to people, I talked to people in Nicaragua who were opposed to the Sandinistas.

BUCHANAN: Mike, here's what I'm getting at. Look, by your friends ye shall know them. Now, if they've got these thugs and North Vietnamese...

FARRELL: Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Wait a minute.

First of all...

BRADEN: ...by their friends, ye shall know them.

BUCHANAN: The Bible, Braden.

FARRELL: Yes. But first of all, it seems to me that what we have to do is take responsibility for having empowered the most radical elements of that regime by our atrociously negative and bellicose attitude toward them. If we do that, we drive them into the arms of the very people...

BUCHANAN: Hold it. The most negative and radical elements are Borge and the Ortega brothers.

FARRELL: The most radical elements in that society are being empowered by the United States' position against Nicaragua. And it seems to me that what we need to do is ameliorate those problems by opening up communication.

BUCHANAN: When the Sandinistas came to power, the United States, in 18 months or two years, provided them with more aid than we'd provided the Somoza dynasty in 40 years. We provided them with more aid.

FARRELL: I don't know about that.

BUCHANAN: The President said that. Is he lying?

FARRELL: The President has lied many times, and we all know it.

BUCHANAN: Why do you think the President is against the Nicaraguan revolution?

FARRELL: Because I think the President has an ideological fixation against anything he perceives as Marxist-Leninist, whether or not it is. And he is unwilling to alter that based on new facts.

BUCHANAN: You suggest it is not Marxist-Leninist down there.

FARRELL: I am suggesting there are Marxist-Leninists down there, just as there are Christian Democrats down there and conservative elements and moderate elements.

BUCHANAN: I talked to Obando y Bravo. I have not met Ortega. I asked him what they're doing good down there in the revolution. He's the Archbishop, as you know, of Managua. And he said they do have universal education. He said, "But what's

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wrong with this government is it is teaching the children class hatred."

FARRELL: That is Obandon y Bravo's opinion. The people down there that I talked to said that they are having the opportunity to learn for the first time in their lives. They're having health care offered them for the first time in their lives.

BRADEN: Let me just ask you, Mr. Farrell, is it not a fact that perhaps Pat ought to look at the history books and discover that there has been class hatred in Central America since the Spanish arrived?

FARRELL: I think history books will verify that.

BUCHANAN: Let me ask you this. A priest, Father Bismarck...

FARRELL: Carbaio (?).

BUCHANAN: ...Carbaio, stripped naked and marched through the streets by the Sandinistas. Why'd they do that?

FARRELL: They were trying to embarrass him because --and they did it by having a woman pose as a seductress and have him come in and try to seduce her, in exchange for which, when he took his clothes off, they made a fool of him.

You know, so what? They are doing terrible things, and so are we. My point is, isn't there a more humane and a better way to proceed in terms of international relations than this kind of stupid and unhuman activity?

BUCHANAN: Let's assume for the sake of argument that we have a Marxist-Leninist regime in power by force of arms, they've got a hundred thousand people in power. For the sake of argument, how do you get that type of regime out of power so that you can have a pluralistic and democratic society?

FARRELL: First of all, what you have to do is communicate with them. You've got to open up some channels of communication in which you can bring to bear the pressures, the moral pressures we have, and I think we have, at our...

BUCHANAN: Name one example of a regime that has been -- a regime of that character, Marxist-Leninist, or even a right-wing fascist regime, that has been turned over by moral pressure.

FARRELL: Argentina.

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BUCHANAN: Argentina was turned over by moral pressure?

FARRELL: That's correct. Argentina just awarded Jimmy Carter an award -- gave Jimmy Carter an award and thanked him for effectively being the sponsor of their democracy.

BUCHANAN: You don't think that the discrediting of the junta by virtue of its having attacked -- or seized the Falkland Islands a defeat in war?

FARRELL: All I can tell you is that President Alfonsin said Jimmy Carter's human rights policy was directly responsible for his accession to the presidency.

BUCHANAN: And you think that will work with the Sandinistas.

FARRELL: Well, I think it's worth a try. I think it's going to work a hell of a lot better than teaching people how to murder and teaching...

BRADEN: Pat, do you think assassination would work better?

Gentlemen, we have to take a break.

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BUCHANAN: Our guest is Mike Farrell, a famous and popular actor. You probably know him from M*A*S*H, if not from a number of other shows. He's the head of a Hollywood-based Committee of Concern, and it's concerned about American involvement in Central America.

Mike Farrell, you are a popular actor, and I guess you've got a great following here in the country. I'm sure you do, as all other actors do. Are you not concerned that something might happen to Mike Farrell such as happened to Jane Fonda? She went over made -- I think she still -- she thinks it as stupid now, but posed behind that antiaircraft gun in North Vietnam.

FARRELL: Let's back up a second. There are a lot of people who like M*A*S*H and there are some people who like the work I do. I don't consider them a following in terms of doing what I say to do or leading where I go. People are people, and I think they can discern the difference between me as an actor and me as a citizen. That's all I'm suggesting.

BUCHANAN: Yeah, but you're not here because you're simply, you know, a citizen concerned.

FARRELL: No, of course. Because citizens who come in

here and object to the government's, the Administration's policies aren't invited on your show, generally speaking. I beg your pardon. Many citizens who are not known do not get invited on television shows because the media operates the way it does. So the fact is that...

BUCHANAN: You're making my point, which is that you're here because you're a famous person. Okay?

FARRELL: Uh-huh.

BUCHANAN: Are you not concerned that you're going to become identified, say, as Ed Asner and Jane Fonda, especially, did?

FARRELL: No, I'm not concerned. I mean it's like saying am I concerned that I'm going to be elected President because Ronald Reagan did. I'm concerned about certain things, as a citizen, and I think I ought to be able to express those feelings.

BUCHANAN: What I'm getting at is Jane Fonda, obviously, made a hell of a mistake going up to North Vietnam.

FARRELL: People do make mistakes. Ronald Reagan has made mistakes. So did John Wayne.

BUCHANAN: Are you concerned that you're making a mistake?

FARRELL: I'm not concerned that I'm making a mistake. I'm concerned about the mess I see and about what seems to me to be totally inconsistent behavior between the ideals I was taught in school in this country and the practices that this government is carrying forward.

BUCHANAN: Suppose Ronald Reagan, in his heart of hearts -- and he's probably as decent a guy as you -- is trying to prevent happening to the Nicaraguan people what happened to the Cuban people under Fidel Castro. Would you not agree that at least his objectives are good, then?

FARRELL: If that is his objective, I don't think that I would necessarily argue, although his methods are absolutely inhumane, and I think un-American.

BRADEN: Well, let me ask you...

BUCHANAN: You mean fighting militarily?

BRADEN: Mr. Farrell, let me ask you about the actor who

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is in the White House. The question has been raised recently about whether he knows what's going on in the United States Government. Now, you know, I suppose, that we had recently passed a law forbidding the Central Intelligence Agency from any -- conducting any policies of assassination, encouraging assassination, or indeed assassinating. What is your view of whether Ronald Reagan is in control of this government when we discover down among the Contras a pamphlet put out by the CIA telling people specifically how to assassinate the leaders of the opposition?

FARRELL: Well, President Reagan said last night that the CIA is not out of control. President Reagan knew about the mining of the harbors in Nicaragua. President Reagan knows about the covert activities, and has. Although it was denied originally in his Administration, it is now being relatively freely admitted. President Reagan knows about the things that are going on. And I think President ought to just take a look at what we say we believe in, and then formulate policies that are based on some kind of consistency with those beliefs.

BUCHANAN: Mike Farrell, though, look. What I'm picking up here is a real hostility and a gross opposition to the idea of the use of military force. Now, the communists or the Marxists or the leftists...

BRADEN: We're talking about assassination, Pat.

FARRELL: I've served in the military of this country, Pat.

BRADEN: We're talking about assassination, Pat. Do you defend that? Do you think the CIA did the right thing?

BUCHANAN: I think they probably picked up one of Ho Chi Minh or Che Guevara's or Mao Tse-tung's pamphlets, sent them down there, which do recommend assassination.

FARRELL: They just authored this.

BRADEN: They wrote it themselves.

FARRELL: Are they beyond offering such advice?

BUCHANAN: Do you think Bill Casey would deliberately violate the law and send down...

FARRELL: I think he has deliberately violated the law. Absolutely.

BRADEN: Are you kidding?

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FARRELL: And that's why Pat Moynihan called for his resignation and that's why Tip O'Neill called for his resignation. Yes, I think he's violated the law, and I think he deserves to be the hell out of there. Yeah.

BUCHANAN: How about the President? Do you think the President...

FARRELL: I think he ought to be ashamed of himself. And I think every American who understands what this country is about ought to be outraged at that kind of behavior on the part of a representative agency in this country.

BUCHANAN: Mike Farrell, do you know what the Contras are doing in Nicaragua?

FARRELL: The Contras are doing in Nicaragua? Damn right I know what the Contras are doing.

BUCHANAN: They're shooting and killing and they're conducting a guerrilla war.

FARRELL: You hear what you just said? Yes, conducting a guerrilla war.

BUCHANAN: That's right.

FARRELL: Sponsored by the United States Government. And that is the difference. I don't care -- if the people of Nicaragua want to conduct a guerrilla war against the Sandinistas, that is their business. If they cannot do so without CIA funding, without your tax dollars and my tax dollars supporting it, then it doesn't deserve to happen. These people are no better than mercenaries. They have been mercenaries.

BUCHANAN: Wait a minute now. Hold it a second.

FARRELL: That's exactly what they are. That's what you call a soldier who does what he does because he gets paid for it by...

BUCHANAN: You are talking about 20,000 Nicaraguans who are being paid pennies...

FARRELL: That's, I'm afraid, an overstatement of...

BUCHANAN: How about freedom fighters? Would you call George Washington a mercenary?

FARRELL: That's one of the statements that George Bush made the other night that I think is egregious. I think to call

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the Contras that operate in Nicaragua freedom fighters is like calling Jack the Ripper a feminist.

BUCHANAN: They are trying to recapture the revolution betrayed by a bunch of...

FARRELL: That's what they say.

BUCHANAN: All these guys. Name one of the leaders of the Contras, the leaders, Colero, Eden Pastora. Is he a mercenary?

FARRELL: Eden Pastora has refused to have anything to do with CIA money. Eden Pastora...

BUCHANAN: He has?

FARRELL: Yes, he has.

BUCHANAN: You better call Bill Casey on that. Get your information up to date.

FARRELL: Yes, I'll call Bill Casey. My information is as up to date as I can have it.

BUCHANAN: Why would Eden Pastora...

FARRELL: Eden Pastora has said anybody who is in league with the Somozistas and the FDN and takes CIA money is a traitor to the cause of a free Nicaragua.

BRADEN: He's said that many times, Pat.

BUCHANAN: Why does Eden Pastora take up arms and try to overthrow forcibly...

FARRELL: Because he disagrees with the Sandinistas.

BUCHANAN: ...the government in Nicaragua?

FARRELL: Because he disagrees with the Sandinistas, and that is his right.

BUCHANAN: Why don't they settle it at the polls?

FARRELL: Maybe they will. Ortega said after the election on the 4th of November -- and I understand you believe all Marxists are liars and he probably doesn't mean what he says. But what he said was, and let us test him on it, after the election there will be an open congressional forum in which Pastora and all of the others who are opposed to the regime now

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will be able to take part in formulating a new constitution for Nicaragua.

Now, why don't we call his bluff? Instead of murdering their people, why don't we just let them see if they're telling the truth?

BUCHANAN: Mike Farrell, what I can't understand is why you would call mercenaries, not Americans, but Nicaraguans who are fighting to recapture a revolution which has been betrayed to Cubans...

FARRELL: Because, Pat...

BRADEN: Well, who's paying them, Pat?

BUCHANAN: Who paid the American Revolutionaries? The French.

BRADEN: Not the CIA.

BUCHANAN: The French, the French.

BRADEN: Oh, come on.

FARRELL: Okay. Are we going to be patterning our government after the French now?

BUCHANAN: Look, wait a minute. The American Revolution succeeded because it was supported by the King of France.

FARRELL: It is fairly clearly known, and I think you know it as well, that the so-called Contras, the so-called freedom fighters would disappear if it were not for CIA money. Now, what does that say about their commitment?

BUCHANAN: What it says is that the Ortega brothers have established themselves in power as effectively as Castro; and unless you use military force, they're not going out.

FARRELL: Oh, that's utter nonsense. I've been there, Pat. Why don't you just go down and look around? Why don't you talk to the people? There are people...

BUCHANAN: We've had a lot of them come up here. They're all refugees.

FARRELL: That's fine. There are people down there sitting in their houses disagreeing with the Sandinistas today. There are six political...

BUCHANAN: Hold it, Mike Farrell. The Sandinistas are popular?

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FARRELL: Hold it yourself. There are six political parties running against the Sandinistas in this election.

BUCHANAN: Six political parties?

FARRELL: Six political parties. One of them is the Communist Party, which is not the Sandinista Party. One of them is the Conservative Independent Party. One of them is the Social Democratic Party. And they are running in this election against the Sandinistas, and they're allowed to do so. Now, why don't people know that?

BUCHANAN: You mean to tell me that, according to Mike Farrell, what we've got is sort of a free election down there in Central America with legitimate opposition? Why are they crushing the free press? How can you have an election without a free press?

FARRELL: They say...

BUCHANAN: They say what? Ortega told you this?

FARRELL: ...they are doing the same things, in terms of press censorship, that the United States Government did during the war, and they are doing it because of the war. If we would release the pressure of war against them, then we could find out if they're telling the truth.

BUCHANAN: Look, they've been in power, Mike Farrell, five years.

FARRELL: And they did not originally have press censorship.

[Confusion of voices]

BRADEN: Isn't it true -- is it not possible, at least, that, minus the Contras, the Nicaraguan people might want our aid, need our aid, and come to us and talk about it?

FARRELL: Of course. Absolutely.

BRADEN: But if you're fighting a war, Pat...

BUCHANAN: Tom, come on. We've got to go through it again?

Mike Farrell, name one Marxist regime which has come to power, installed itself, which has surrendered power in an election, one in the whole world.

FARRELL: I really think that's irrelevant.

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BUCHANAN: It's not irrelevant if they're Marxists.

FARRELL: Well, of course it's irrelevant, if they're Marxists. There are also...

BUCHANAN: You don't think they are?

FARRELL: No, I don't think they're Marxists. I don't think they're all Marxists. I don't think Miguel D'Escoto, the Catholic priest, is a godless Marxist.

BUCHANAN: I know Miguel D'Escoto well. I went to...

FARRELL: Do you think he's a godless Marxist?

BUCHANAN: I think Miguel D'Escoto, an old friend of mine, has lost his way, he's given up his priesthood.

FARRELL: Yes, but do you think he's a godless Marxist, as the Vice President called them on...

BUCHANAN: I think he is a Marxist. That's exactly right.

FARRELL: Is he a godless Marxist?

BUCHANAN: That doesn't make much difference.

FARRELL: It does make a difference. The people in this country who despise communism in a knee-jerk manner do so because they call it atheistic communism. Now, if it's not going to be atheistic communism...

BUCHANAN: Why do you despise communism, Mike Farrell?

BRADEN: Tom and Mike, I'm going to have to...

BUCHANAN: Why do you despise communism?

FARRELL: I don't despise it.

BUCHANAN: You don't despise it?

BRADEN: The only way I can get him off your back is to tell you that we're finished, we're through. And we want to thank Mike Farrell for being our guest on Crossfire tonight.

FARRELL: What's more, I don't fear communism.

BUCHANAN: Why not?

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BUCHANAN: China, Tom, Vietnam, Cambodia, Cuba. How many -- Nicaragua. How many communist revolutions does it take before you guys wake up and understand what the situation is all about?

BRADEN: If you want to have a war, Pat, let's declare war on Nicaragua and let's send the Army down there. I'd be in favor of that rather than what we're doing.

And let me straighten you out on the problem -- I'd like to help you -- on the problem of assassination, Pat.

BUCHANAN: Sure.

BRADEN: I don't think you quite understand it.

BUCHANAN: Well, you were at the CIA when it was...

BRADEN: It's a game at which two can play. And that's why we've outlawed it.

BUCHANAN: Well, Tom, as I recall correctly, the assassination issue came up in the CIA when the Kennedy brothers tried to kill Fidel Castro. Is that right?

BRADEN: It's a game which two can play, and it's quite possible that we lost a President because two can play. It's a bad policy. And you ought -- what you ought to be doing is denouncing Ronald Reagan for permitting it.